

March 11, 1960  
Box 1510  
East Carolina College  
Greenville, N.C.

Governor Luther Hodges  
Raleigh  
North Carolina

Dear Governor Hodges:

I would like to register my distress and anxiety at the turn recent events have taken in North Carolina. The fact that Negroes have to struggle to achieve their constitutional rights is ridiculous. Not only this, it is abhorrent to those of us who truly believe "all men are created equal.....and endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

I am a native North Carolinian, and I understand much of what lies behind the prejudice of these people--ignorance, pure and simple. Well, this is to be understood and even tolerated to a certain extent because each generation becomes more educated and enlightened.

However, the real cause for distress comes when men such as yourself, who hold responsible positions, take narrow-minded views based on expediency. You people have left the ethical yardstick behind and are thinking only of political expediency.

I wonder if you have read either The Mind of The South by W.J. Cash and The Seeds of Time by Henry Savage? If not, I believe you would find them provocative and enlightening reading.

However, as well as being Governor of our state and a man who holds a position supposedly connected with the law of the land, you of course have your ~~own~~ opinion as an individual citizen. ( Even if it is that nothing should be allowed which would interfere with commerce, as you advocated in your press conference of March 9, 1960.)

This brings me to the real objection I have to your policies. I feel that you have no right to dictate to the various colleges that they tell their students to refrain from taking part in peaceful demonstrations on behalf of civil rights. ( also from the press conference of March 9, 1960) I feel this to be an infringement of our civil liberties. We are citizens of the United States and the Constitution (which believe it or not, is the law of the land) guarantees the rights of its people to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly.

If the adult leaders of state were less bigoted and narrow-minded, the students would not be placed in a situation where by merely trying to preserve their integrity, they are misrepresented as agitators. For you see, there happen to be a few of us who believe that all men are brothers and that the principal thing which Christ had to say was "Love all mankind". We happen to believe in the ideals expressed in our Declaration of Independence and our Constitution. We believe in the "American Dream" and want to make it a reality.

Besides this aspect of the issue of academic freedom. Instructing students as to why, when, where and over what they may peacefully demonstrate is in direct opposition to any semblance of academic freedom.